HEADS OF A WEEK-DAY LECTURE,

DELIVERED TO A COUNTRY CONGREGATION IN ——SHIRE.

BEFORE we meet again, we shall have celebrated the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, the Apostles. You will be at your daily work, and will not have the opportunity to attend the service in church. For that reason, it may be as well, you should lay up some good thoughts against that day; and such, by God's blessing, I will now attempt to give you.

As you well know, there were twelve Apostles; St. Simon and St. Jude were two of them. They preached the Gospel of CHRIST; and they were like CHRIST, as far as sinful man may be accounted like the blessed Son of GOD. They were like CHRIST in their deeds and in their sufferings. The Gospel for the festival * shows us this. They were like CHRIST in their works, because CHRIST was a witness of the Father, and they were witnesses of CHRIST. CHRIST came in the name of GOD the Father Almighty; He "came "and spoke," and "did works which none other man did." In like manner, the Apostles were sent "to bear witness of CHRIST, to "declare His power, His great mercy, His sufferings on the cross "for the sins of all men, His willingness to save all who come to "Him."

But again, they were like CHRIST in their *sufferings*. "If the "world hate you," He says to them, "you know that it hated "Me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world "would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth "you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is "not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they "will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will "keep yours also."

Thus, they were like CHRIST in *office*. I do not speak of their holiness, their faith, and all their other high excellences, which GOD the Holy Ghost gave them. I speak now, not of their personal graces, but of their *office*, of preaching, of witnessing CHRIST, of suffering for being His servants. Men ought to have listened to them, and honoured them; some did; but the many, the world did not—they *hated* them; they hated them, for their office-sake; not because they were Paul, and Peter, and Simon, and Jude, but because they bore witness to the Son of GOD and were chosen to be His Ministers.

* John xv. 17.

Here is a useful lesson for us at this day. The Apostles indeed are dead; yet it is quite as possible for men still to hate their preaching and to persecute them, as when they were alive. For in one sense they are still alive; I mean, they did not leave the world without appointing persons to take their place; and these persons represent them, and may be considered with reference to us, as if they were the Apostles. When a man dies, his son takes his property, and represents him; that is, in a manner he still lives in the person of his son. Well, this explains how the Apostles may be said to be still among us; they did not indeed leave their sons to succeed them as Apostles, but they left *spiritual* sons; they did not leave this life, without first solemnly laying their hands on the heads of certain of their flock, and these took their place, and represented them after their death.

But it may be asked, are these spiritual sons of the Apostles still alive? no;—all this took place many hundred years ago. These sons and heirs of the Apostles died long since. But then they in turn did not leave the world without committing their sacred office to a fresh set of Ministers, and they in turn to another, and so on even to this day. Thus the Apostles had, first, spiritual sons; then spiritual grandsons; then great grandsons; and so on from one age to another down to the present time.

Again, it may be asked, *who* are at this time the successors and spiritual descendants of the Apostles? I shall surprise some people by the answer I shall give; though it is very clear, and there is no doubt about it; THE BISHOPS. They stand in the place of the Apostles; and, whatever we ought to do, had we lived when the Apostles were alive, the same ought we to do for the Bishops. He that despises them, despises the Apostles. It is our duty to reverence them for their office-sake; they are the shepherds of CHRIST's flock. If we knew them well, we should love them for the many excellent graces they possess, for their piety, loving-kindness, and other virtues. But we do not know them; yet still, for all this, we may honour them as the ministers of CHRIST, without going so far as to consider their *private* worth; and we may keep to their "fellowship,"* as we should to that of the Apostles. I say, we may all thus honour them even without knowing them in private, because of their high office; for they have the marks of CHRIST's presence upon them, in that they *witness* for CHRIST, and *suffer* for Him, as the Apostles did. I will explain to you how this is.

There is a temptation which comes on many men to honour no one, except such as they themselves know, such as have done a

* Acts ii. 42.

favour or kindness to them personally. Thus sometimes people speak against those who are put over them in this world's matters, as the King. They say, "What is the King to me? he never did me any good." Now, I answer, whether he did or not, is nothing to the purpose. We are bound *for* CHRIST'S sake, to honour him *because* he is King, though he lives far from us; and this all well-disposed right-minded people do. And so, in just the same way, though for much higher reasons, we must honor the Bishop, because he *is* the Bishop;—for his *office*-sake;—because he is CHRIST'S Minister, stands in the place of the Apostles, is the Shepherd of our souls on earth, while CHRIST is away. This is FAITH, to look at things not as seen, but as unseen; to be as sure that the Bishop is CHRIST'S appointed Representative, as if we actually saw upon his head a cloven tongue like as of fire, as you may read in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

But you will say, how do we know this, since we do not see it. I repeat, the Bishops are Apostles to us, from their *witnessing* CHRIST, and *suffering* for Him.

1. They witness CHRIST in their very *name*, for He is the true Bishop of our souls, as St. Peter says, and they are Bishops. They witness CHRIST in their *station*;—there is but one LORD to save us, and there is but one Bishop in each place. The meetingers have no head, they are all of them mixed together in a confused way; but we of CHRIST'S Holy Church have one Bishop over us, and our Bishop is the Bishop of ——. Many of you have seen him lately, when he confirmed in our church. That very *confirmation* is another ordinance, in which the Bishop witnesses CHRIST. Our LORD confirms us with the Spirit in all goodness; the Bishop is His figure and likeness, when he lays his hands on the heads of children. Then CHRIST comes to them, to confirm in them the grace of Baptism. Moreover, the Bishop *rules* the whole Church here below, as CHRIST rules it above; and here again the Bishop is a figure or witness of CHRIST. And further, it is the Bishop who makes us Clergymen GOD'S Ministers. He is CHRIST'S instrument; and he visibly chooses those whom CHRIST chooses invisibly, to serve in the Word and Sacraments of the Church. And thus it is from the Bishop that the *news of redemption and the means of grace* have come to all men; this again is a witnessing CHRIST. I, who speak to you concerning CHRIST, was ordained to do so by the Bishop; he speaks in me,—as CHRIST wrought in him, and as GOD sent CHRIST. Thus the whole plan of salvation hangs together.—CHRIST the True Mediator above; His servant, the Bishop, His earthly likeness; mankind the subjects of His teaching; GOD the Author of Salvation.

2. But I must now mention the more painful part of the subject, i. e. the *sufferings* of the Bishops, which is the second mark of their being our living Apostles. The Bishops have undergone this trial in every age. As the first Apostles were hated and persecuted, so have they ever been. Time was, when they were cruelly slain by fire and sword. That time, (though GOD avert it!) may come again. But, whether or not Satan is permitted so openly to rage, certainly some kinds of persecution are to be expected in our day; nay, such have begun. It is not so very long since the great men of the earth told them to *prepare for persecution*; it is not so very long since the mad people answered the summons, and furiously attacked them, and seemed bent on destroying them, in all parts of the country.

Yes! the day may come, even in this generation, when the Representatives of CHRIST are spoiled of their sacred possessions, and degraded from their civil dignities. The day may come, when each of us inferior Ministers—when I myself, whom you know—may have to give up our Churches, and be among you, in no better temporal circumstances than yourselves; with no larger dwelling, no finer clothing, no other fare, with nothing different beyond those gifts, which I trust we gained when we were made Ministers; and those again, which have been vouchsafed to us before and after that time, for the due fulfilment of our Ministry. Then you will look at us, not as gentlemen, as now; not as your superiors in worldly station, but still, nay, more strikingly so than now, still as messengers from Him, who seeth and worketh in secret, and who judgeth not by outward appearance. Then you will honor us, with a purer honor than you do now, namely, as those who are intrusted with the keys of heaven and hell, as the heralds of mercy, as the denouncers of woe to wicked men, as intrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine CHRIST'S body and blood, as far greater than the most powerful and the wealthiest of men in our unseen strength and our heavenly riches. This may all come in our day; and I can hardly wish it should not come, painful as is the thought of the great wickedness, which those men must show forth, who persecute us; painful as is the thought of the sufferings, which that persecution will cause us. And, after all, if GOD'S loving kindness spares both us and you the trial, still it will have been useful to have steadily thought about it beforehand, and to have prepared our hearts to meet it.

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